

The Hamburg correspondent of the *London and China Express* writes:—The project for a direct line of German mail steamers to the East Indies, China and Australia has been revived under the Postmaster-General, who offers an annual subsidy of £4,000,000 (£200,000) so that each line would receive the sum of £100,000. These amounts, however, are regarded as exports for the work. It is taken into consideration that the steamers of the new line are to develop an average speed of 11½ knots for the whole voyage, and moreover, are to be furnished with full cabin passenger accommodation, and are to be of the tonnage of 2,600 tons each. As neither of the two German lines, which at present are trading in the direction named (namely, the German Steamship Company to the Far East, and the Australasian line to Australia) is in possession of steamers which would fulfil the conditions laid down by the Postmaster-General, it is clear that new boats would have to be built, so that a sum of at least £3,000,000 would be required to be expended. If, indeed, such new lines were established, it is clearly evident that the existing lines would be ruined; but that kind of consequence to the Government. The Nord-Lloyd of Bremen has entered into negotiations with the government on the matter.

A REMARKABLE CASE of 'insomnia' is at present exciting much interest at Whaling, Western Virginia. A ship-carpenter, by name Joseph Sausbury, has not slept an hour at a time, nor more than ten hours at all since the 1st of January, yet he is, it is stated, 'round and healthy,' and works every day at his trade with relaxation and vigour. When these facts first became known it was suspected that Sausbury was an impostor who merely wished to gain notoriety. Two persons were therefore appointed to watch him every night after his bedtime. Their remarks in the morning do not desire to sleep, but spends the night reading and smoking, and is apparently as fresh in the morning as though he had just risen from a sound night's rest. Several physicians have since taken it in turn to sit up all night with Sausbury, and are quite at a loss to account for this strange phenomenon. It is more than thirty days since Sausbury went to bed. He declares that he has now lost all desire for repose, and was never better in his life. It is by no means impossible that Sausbury has a long disorder that sleep is not required by human beings. Nearly every description of food and drink is already condemned as unnecessary by many medical authorities, and clothing and sleep will probably follow. Everything points to a speedy and complete cure of the man.

CONRAD WILKINSON, in his report on the trade of Manila for 1883, says:—A kind of commercial income tax of 5 per cent. on the net profits of all mercantile firms consisting of more than one person, as well as on the profits of banks and industrial companies, has lately been imposed here and in the rest of the Philippine Islands. The mercantile community here strenuously opposed this new impost, and for some time refused to pay it, on the ground that the industrial and other taxes imposed upon them were already much too heavy. The Government, however, stood firm, and the merchants had eventually to submit. This measure, when taken in connection with the recent decree prohibiting foreign companies from acquiring landed property of any kind in the Philippine Islands, seems to indicate a firm resolve on the part of the Spanish Government to prevent as much as possible the trade and industry of these islands from being entirely monopolised by foreigners to the exclusion of a native Spanish subject, and yet without foreign money and capital there is but little chance that the great natural resources these islands possess will ever be fully developed. It is a well-known fact that the great increase which has taken place within the last thirty years in the trade between these islands and Great Britain and the United States is entirely due to British and American capital and enterprise. The absence of lighthouses and the imperfect manner in which the coast has been surveyed, and the navigation amongst them extremely difficult and dangerous. The apathy and indifference shown on the subject by the Spanish steamship owners, whose vessels enjoy the exclusive privilege of carrying on a yearly-increasing coasting trade, is much to be regretted, for there is no doubt that if proper representations were made by them to the Spanish Government the latter would not order a fresh survey of these islands at least establish a few lighthouses where they are most needed. The first Spanish steamer employed to carry on coasting navigation between Manila and the rest of the Philippine Islands began to run in 1850; since that epoch several steamship companies have been formed, and the number of steamers employed now on the coasting trade is 42, of an average burden of 300 tons each.

With reference to the stranding of the *Poseid*, the *N. U. D. News* of May 30th says:—

The *Hobson*, Captain Warden, from Swatow, arrived at Whangpoo on Wednesday night, and at her wharf yesterday morning, and reported the stranding of the *Indo-China S. N. Co.'s* steamer *Poseid*, Captain Irvine, from Hongkong to Shanghai via Swatow. The *Poseid* left Swatow two hours ahead of the *Hobson*, but the latter vessel stopped to have a cargo of tin ore taken on board at the island of Pongee, off the coast of the Philippines. The *Hobson* was only a little way ahead. A fog having set in, the *Hobson* anchored at St. S. W. of Tungking. She then made for Steep Island, when she saw the *Poseid* showing signals of distress. The *Poseid* was then on the N. E. side of a rock about one mile south of the Fisherman's group of islands and about four miles distant from Steep Island. It appears that the *Poseid* struck on the rock during a dense fog at 3.12 on the morning of the 27th instant, as, owing to the fog, Steep Island light could not be seen. Captain Warden had his boats lowered, and sent them with the Chief Officer to see if he could render any assistance. When the *Hobson* first saw the stranded steamer it was soon afterwards, and she stood on for the rest of the day and took off a number of passengers, mails and treasure; but she was not able to take them all that day, as the worst weather set in, so she steamed in shore and anchored for the night. On the following morning she got up steam, returned to the *Poseid* and took off the remainder of the passengers and Mr. T. Craig, the Chief Engineer, finally leaving for Shanghai at 8 a.m. The passengers were Mr. Johnston and Miss Mitchell, and about seventy-five Chinese, and the treasure consisted of six boxes. The *Hobson* also brought up four of the *Poseid's* boats. On her way up, she met the *Stevedore* of Bonham at noon on Wednesday and reported the accident to the *Poseid*, and Captain Mitchell then proceeded to her assistance. When the *Poseid* was in a ledge of rocks, with about seven fathoms of water off it, though it is only the fore part of the vessel that is ashore, there being apparently plenty of water under her stern. Right in front

of the bow is a steep rock, and the vessel is close to it. The fore compartment is full of water, but the *Poseid* is a strong ship, and her water-tight compartments have prevented the water running aft. We believe it is not known in Shanghai how much she is damaged, as the injury is well below the water line; but the tide at high water flows over her main deck forward. Yesterday afternoon the tugboat *Falder*, with pumping gear, and towing the *Falder*, proceeded to the stranded vessel. Mr. Craig, with Mr. Armstrong of the Old Dock, went in her.

When the *Hobson* left, there were hundreds of boats round the *Poseid* waiting their opportunity to loot the vessel.

H.B.M.'s Gunboat *Esper* was, we learn, to be sent to protect the ship from the natives.

THE PREPARATION OF TEA.

General Meny writes to us from Soochow, under date of May 26th, as follows:—I have just met a Mr. He, who is a native of Hui-chow Fu, in Anhui, and whose family has for three generations been employed in the preparation of tea for the English market. That kind of tea, called Mo-yun, so highly prized in England, comes from friend He's native place. He tells me that it owes much of its excellence to careful manipulation when firing. The firing pans are, he tells me, always laid with their edges horizontal, so that they are heated on all sides uniformly, the greatest heat being of course at the bottom, nearest the fire, whence it radiates equally all around. An expert person can fire in a proper manner only three or four pounds of tea daily. A small quantity, about as much as a person can hold in both hands, is placed in the pan at a time, and is constantly worked in a manner to roll the leaves whilst the firing is going on. Mr. He informs me that heavy losses have been sustained in the tea trade of late years.

Tea being much cheaper than formerly, it is impossible to make anything out of it. In former years these teas were carried to Canton for sale, and brought fine prices. Of late years, however, there is generally a loss of twenty per cent. on cost of production, my informant says, but how they can manage to carry on a trade under such circumstances I cannot understand.

He tells me that the preparation of the tea is a costly and tedious affair. The tea trade commences now in May. People are bringing in their teas in small parcels of three or four pounds to the receivers or Hong. Some of these Hong have a hundred men or more employed to select and pack the teas. He has over a hundred. These men have to be well paid, as the work must be done smartly and well, so as to catch the market, and preserve its quality. In the first place the tea has all been sorted by hand and both ends of each leaf nipped off, leaving just the body of the leaf only to pass as first quality tea. This work is done by women whose nimble fingers manage to do a lot in one day, and at lower wages than men would do the work for. The careful selection and equal nipping is thus an important matter, but the proper firing is undoubtedly the most important of all. Careful packing is also an indispensable necessity in order to preserve the aroma of the tea on the voyage, as no amount of proper firing can preserve the quality unless it is also well packed.

NOTES FROM THE METROPOLIS.

(From our Correspondent.)

London, May 1st. Everybody is ill and in bad spirits. The terrible East winds show little signs of departure, and, having found out the weakest spot in everybody's constitution, is a thorn in their side with frequent fatal effect. The theatres are empty, the restaurants and streets deserted; everybody has to go home to nurse some poor ailment, or cheer up some sufferer. Banned from England, and unknown in the tropics.

Easter this season has not been favoured with fine weather. The snow of Easter Monday last year was not repeated but the East winds interfered sadly with the holiday making. The great wave of temperance which has swept over this country has undoubtedly had much good effect, the charges at the police courts notwithstanding the trying weather being abnormally light. Brighton did not secure the Volunteers this year and there was waiting amongst the lodging houses hurried in consequence. Our household troops went to Portsmouth and Dover and the operations were much improved in character.

Just now, when the winter gas bills, in large figures, are staring householders in the face, a lecture and demonstration of the use of the electric light in our houses was bound to be popular. This Mr. Robert Hammond gave at St. James' Hall on Wednesday last. On the platform of the great hall was a room fitted up with furniture, curtains, pictures, ornaments and flowers brightly lighted with incandescent lamps of different patterns. It was shown there was no danger to life, or of fire, the light was easy of control and could be lowered without being turned out. There is not, so far, any data to go upon, but when prepared on as large a scale as it now is ready to be, it should be distributed at 3s. per 1000 feet to the consumer. The signs of Primrose Day were not wanting. I passed on the morning of the

previous day an enormous market cart laden high with Lord Beaconsfield's favorite flower. So far from there being any falling off in the observation, Great Conservatives are launching out to greater extent than they did last year. At dinners and balls the rooms were decked with flowers.

Julie, the famous Parisian actress, is coming to London to act in the French plays, now a standard entertainment during the London season. I must beg, however, or steal, the price of a stall to view the oxyd beauty.

The rage for professional beards seems almost to have died away. Scarcely a photo of Mrs. Langtry is now to be seen, and those of Mrs. Wheeler, Lady Lonsdale and others are as scarce. But during the last few weeks there has been in the photo shops the picture of a certain notorious Mrs. Roche, which is well worth seeing.

A person in Suffolk has just given his flock a very practical lesson. The farmer would not believe that the crows are their friends, and so the pastor sowed a field with barley, planting very thinly, and using no scarecrows. The crows had swooped down at once to the disturbed soil, but had without doubt only fed on the stubs.

£2,000 reward. The length and breadth of the United Kingdom has been plundered with this offer, but life is dear, and no traitor is likely to follow in the steps of the wretched Carver. The scent of the dynamite explosions is, and will, in all probability, be kept. The small case vouchsafed to the informant is now reeling on our Government.

The Parks Railway scheme is not being allowed to languish, but the difficulty of ventilation seems great, whilst the opposition against the obnoxious bus holes is keen. It would never do to allow these so long as electric is not the motive power. And this seems far from practicable as the line is to be in conjunction with the Great Western and Metropolitan Railways, and if electricity were introduced, it would have to be worked on at least two of the three systems.

Tagliani, the greatest dancer of the age, has died at the ripe age of seventy-nine. This generation knows little of the triumphs she in her day experienced. When she received over £3,000 per annum as salary it can scarcely be said that even in those days she was not as well paid as our artists of the present day.

(To be continued.)

SUPREME COURT.

IN ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

(Before the Hon. James Russell, Acting Chief Justice.)

Thursday, May 3.

ATMUR HAJER HANSEN v. DANBORN. Mr. H. M. Bailey, instructed by Messrs. Drostons, Watson and Deacon, appeared for the plaintiff; and the Attorney-General (the Hon. E. O'Malley), instructed by Messrs. Sharp, Johnson and Stokes, represented the defendant.

It would appear from the statements made in the plaintiff's petition and by Mr. Bailey, that the plaintiff is a merchant carrying on business in Singapore and other parts in the Far East, among these being Hongkong, and that defendant from 18th August, 1878, until the 31st January, 1881, acted as his manager and agent at that port. Plaintiff's petition says that during that time defendant was entrusted with large sums of money and quantities of valuable goods belonging to the plaintiff; that the defendant's duty was to sell and dispose of these goods and pay over the money realised. Plaintiff now accuses defendant of neglecting to keep proper books and accounts, of rendering false and fraudulent accounts, and of appropriating money and goods belonging to the plaintiff, to his own use; and plaintiff further asserts that he has lost over £9,000 by defendant's false and fraudulent conduct, and that he therefore prays that an account may be taken of all defendant's dealings and transactions with him, and that other relief be afforded him.

Defendant denies all the plaintiff's allegations; and says that by a document executed by the plaintiff, he was released of all his indebtedness to the plaintiff by his form. Mr. Bailey stated the plaintiff's case as follows:—On the 15th August, 1878, defendant was engaged in Singapore to go to Hongkong to act as manager of plaintiff's branch and to take a salary of £200 per annum, with free board and lodging, and his expenses paid. Defendant came to Hongkong, and acted as plaintiff's manager until the end of January, 1881. Towards the end of January, plaintiff, who was contemplating entering into partnership with his brother, and who was also discharging the way in which defendant had conducted his business, wrote to defendant, telling him to settle up all accounts, close up the business and hand his affairs over to a countryman, who had previously acted as plaintiff's agent in Hongkong; and to go very carefully into the accounts to see that all was right. Defendant replied to this letter, stating that he would at once carry out plaintiff's orders. On the 15th April defendant presented a statement of accounts to his countryman showing a cash balance due to plaintiff of £600. His countryman had no time to go into the accounts at that time; but he asked defendant to hand over the £600. This defendant objected to do until the accounts were gone into. A dispute arose, and then defendant suggested that he himself should go to Singapore and see the plaintiff. This was agreed to, and on the 27th February, 1882, he arrived in Singapore and saw the plaintiff, who asked defendant to hand over all the vouchers and documents connected with the Hongkong business. Defendant objected to this, as he said he had still some accounts to settle; and it would be better to hand them all over at once. According to the accounts shown by the defendant to the plaintiff, he had a balance due to plaintiff of £3,082, in settlement of which, together with the cost of defendant's passage money to Singapore, £22, plaintiff gave two drafts, amounting in all to £3,000, on the Chartered Mercantile Bank in Hongkong. No action seems to have been taken at that time with reference to a sum of £353, salary overdrawn by defendant; and plaintiff also agreed to stand security for defendant to the extent of £1,638 to enable him to start business independently in Hongkong. Nothing further transpired until July of the same year, when plaintiff received a demand in favour of Ayne for about \$300, money which he thought had been paid by

defendant. Ten or fifteen days afterwards defendant himself arrived, and also another demand from Ayne for \$350. When asked for explanations in these matters defendant said he had not been able to collect certain debts in Hongkong, and promised to repay the plaintiff as soon as he got the money. Defendant, having paid his £1,638 for which plaintiff had stood security, asked the latter to again become security for him for \$1,400 as a merchant in Singapore. This plaintiff agreed to. At this time, defendant made a good deal of plaintiff, and, according to the plaintiff, he managed to abstract, somewhere or other, all the letters dealing with the matter from his office. In October, 1882, three further demands were made on plaintiff by Chinese creditors in Hongkong, and this circumstance made him determine to go to Hongkong and see what state of affairs was himself, but just before he was about to leave defendant arrived in Singapore, and said he had settled these fresh bills the day before he left. Next day, plaintiff discovered that defendant was about to leave for Bombay. He obtained a subpoena for defendant's arrest, but before it was executed, defendant came to his house and asked leave to stop with him. This allowed the plaintiff's fears, and shortly after defendant gave him goods to the value of \$1,300 in settlement of his security debt and also a promissory note for \$2,000. This note plaintiff was able to, and the defendant, to get discounted at one of the banks, and he could then deduct the \$533 in settlement of the overdraft salary. Plaintiff was unable to cash the note, and used it as a security for a loan of \$2,000, which he used for an action for false imprisonment, and at this stage friends intervened, and an independent jury gave plaintiff a promissory note for \$400, and defendant withdrew his action. As soon as this was done, a short document drawn up by defendant, and signed by all the claims the plaintiff had against him in Singapore. This was the document, Mr. Bailey supposed, the defendant relied upon for opposing the claims of the plaintiff in Hongkong as well as in Singapore. Some time after this document was drawn out, the clerk employed by defendant turned up in Singapore and said he had not been paid his wages. In consequence of this plaintiff came to Hongkong in March, 1883, and found that certain creditors whom defendant represented as having been paid, had not been paid, the amount being about £170. Plaintiff insisted that the books were in a most unsatisfactory state; papers were missing; and the entries were in such a state that it was impossible for the plaintiff to work them without the assistance of the defendant.

Plaintiff then called and gave evidence in accordance with Mr. Bailey's statement. His examination lasted all day, and the case was adjourned.

Police Intelligence.

(Before E. Mackem, Esq.)

Thursday, June 3.

PUBLIC GAMING.

Chan Awa, Lo A Huen and four others, charged with receiving stolen goods, were brought up for trial at the Police Court, on the 2nd instant.

From the evidence it appeared that the two defendants named were the managers of the gambling houses, and they were fined £50 each, and the other four defendants were each fined \$5, or three weeks imprisonment.

LARCENY FROM THE PERSON.

Lo Awa, a tailor, was convicted of stealing a silver watch from the person of a widow named Li A Kwai, on the 2nd inst., and was sentenced to six weeks' hard labour.

(Before A. G. Wise, Esq.)

ROBBERIES AND VIOLENCE.

In Te Cheung, Chan A Cheung and Chan Awan, charged with robbing a public coach, were brought up for trial at the Police Court, on the 2nd inst. The second defendant was also charged with being in unlawful possession of a night pass.

All three prisoners admitted previous convictions, and were sentenced to three months' hard labour as rogues and vagabonds.

LARCENY.

Lo Awa, a street porter, was convicted of stealing a gold watch worth £25, the property of a man named Sing, on the 2nd inst. He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour.

(Before both Magistrates.)

ALLEGED LARCENY OF £44.

Cheung Sing, Chan A Sing, and Chan Aching, appeared, on remand, charged with stealing £44, in sovereigns, from Tung Aye, a coolie, on the 25th inst. Mr. D. Caldwell appeared on behalf of the complainant and Mr. Wilson for the defendants.

Some further evidence was given to the effect that the *Arabic* had been found, 27th ult., by the S. S. *Arabic* from Hongkong, where he had been for four years. On the morning of the 29th he was standing by the door of a boarding house where he was living, and defendant came up and entered into conversation with him, eventually inducing him to accompany him to a house where he would meet the wife and children of a fellow passenger who had died on board the *Arabic*. He went with the defendant to the house 135, Bonhom Street, Canton, and shortly after entering the house the first and second defendants came in and the three defendants seized him and threw him down and took off his watch belt, which contained forty-four sovereigns. He struggled and called for assistance, but none came. The three defendants came up the stairs to see what was the matter, and afterwards a Chinese constable. The latter searched the defendants and found 42 sovereigns on the first, and one sovereign on the second defendant.

The accounts rendered to the Superintendent of the Police by the first defendant, Loung Atoi the man who first went to see the plaintiff's assistant, and Tong Akin, P.C. 105, who arrested the prisoners, and on the application of Mr. Wilson, the case was remanded till next Thursday morning.

THE OPIUM TRADE.

Yesterday afternoon (1st May) the annual meeting of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade was held at the Lecture Hall of the Mansion House, the Lord Mayor (Alderman Fowler, M.P.) presiding. Resolutions in accordance with the tenets of the society were passed, the speakers being the Rev. W. S. Swanson, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, Mr. W. Fowler, M.P., Cardinal Manning, Mr. Edward Clarke, Q.C., M.P., General Aitchison, Rev. Mr. McCullagh, President of the Wesleyan Conference; Rev. Colver Symes, and Mr. Arthur Power, M.P.

The Indian Government's treatment of Opium. Placed as they are, to use the words of the Marquis of Hartington and Lord Rivers, in a somewhat arduous and false position of manufacturers and dealers in the drug, the traders' thirst for profit influences their councils. Recent efforts to increase the area devoted to poppy cultivation have disappointed them; the Indian farmers in some districts have discovered that it is more profitable to plant sugar-cane and other crops; their store of Opium to which they look to make up the deficiency of a bad season, is reduced almost to nothing, and there is a serious falling off in the supply. Four years ago to seven millions last year, and according to the estimate, to six millions and quarter this year. In their alarm the British Opium Department hit upon the expedient of purchasing Opium grown in the native states of India, the Malwa Opium, and working it up in their factories for sale to their own subjects in British territory, and to those of the Native Governments where, through British influence, the growth of the poppy and manufacture of Opium is prohibited, so that they may be able to reserve their own Opium and Benares produce for exportation. The purchase of Malwa Opium is a new development of the trade which we cannot regard without shame and alarm. The Christian Governments of India in the character of native Opium dealers, buying their raw material outside their own territories, manufacturing it for the consumption of their subjects, and contriving to raise the amount exported to unwhipped Chinas, present a painful spectacle, which depicts our country in a way that is to be hoped from the Indian Government will be the matter of Opium.

The British Parliament must command, if the evil is ever to be dealt with. While keeping watch upon events in China and India, the committee has not neglected the society's immediate work of educating public opinion in this country. It has added to its publications the remarkable petition to the House of Commons, signed by 231 Protestant missionaries labouring in China, and signed by 104 National Responsible for Opium, and the Opium Trade. On these occasions, all 100,000 copies of the society's books, pamphlets, and tracts, have been put into circulation. The total number of the public meetings, conferences, and lectures held during the year in connection with the society is 170. The society has a balance-sheet of the society shows a considerable diminution on both sides of the account, as compared with the preceding year, and the amount in hand on Dec. 31 is nearly £200 less than the balance in favour of the society at the end of 1882. The society is discharging its duties in a satisfactory manner by the acquisition of several new subscribers to the Guarantee Fund, in Liverpool and Manchester, the result of the successful conferences held there. The committee also notice with satisfaction the number of small contributions from friends in Wales. Notwithstanding these additions to our resources, they are not satisfied with the financial position of the society. They can point to a large amount of work done by the means of the fund, but must confess to the fact that all the work has not been done, and what requires to be done, in order to bring this important question fairly before the whole country within a reasonable time, and even the full amount of work they have accomplished last year cannot be repeated during the coming year unless their friends support the society more liberally.—*London and China Express.*

THE ORIENTAL BANKING CORPORATION.

(The Indian Statement.)

A very strong and general desire exists in India for the reconstitution of this Bank. And in fact, the reconstitution of the country and it is difficult to find of Bombay or Calcutta without an Oriental Bank in its midst. Its full emphasis the fact that the business of the Eastern Exchange has been largely played out. The growth of the Council Bill, the enormous sum of twenty or twenty-two crores of rupees a year, and the system of telegraphic transfer have thrown three-fourths of the whole business of Exchange into the hands of the Secretary of State, who, if he were wise, would take the entire business of remittance from London into his own hands, and issue Council drafts to any extent demanded upon the Indian treasuries. A very simple solution of the silver difficulty is thus forced to him. By stopping coinage at the Indian Mints on private account, and supplying Council Bills to the place, the system of exchange in India would be brought to a standstill, and the Indian treasuries would be gradually brought back to the *Empire* to its normal standard. For every Council Bill issued in excess of the Home charges, he would ship silver to the Indian Mints to be coined on State account to meet these bills, and by a gradual process of increasing exchange until the difficulty or disturbance of any kind, being the piece back to its proper standard value of 2s.

The Exchange Bank cannot possibly come from themselves that the business of Exchange is likely to be less profitable as time goes on, while it is vital to India that a well-derided system of banking, adapted to her circumstances, should be established amongst us. Of 'banking' proper there is hardly any in India. Each individual trader manages as well as he can upon his own means, the system of collecting the resources of all into central institutions, or of hence re-issued for the assistance of each as required, is traversed by the native banker and his numerous rates of 25 to 50 per cent. If the Oriental Bank, by the reconstitution, by practical, solid men of business, and by the changing conditions of things in the East, and the necessities that have been born of it without being as yet ministered to, the Bank may make a new departure altogether, and strike out a line of business of the last importance to India, and in which it will speedily find imitators. The new Bank ought to be under entirely new direction in London. The conspicuous weakness of its home management for years past, necessarily begets the impression that the stronger management with such powerful friends, the Bank ought to have surmounted its difficulties. Every one in this country will be glad to hear that the Bank is to be reconstituted, and made a more purely Indian bank than it has been since the first five years of its existence.

INDIAN VERSUS CHINESE TEAS.

The controversy on this question wages in strength and interest. Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Money has issued a pamphlet, which sets the whole matter before the world with admirable brevity and point, and which is well worth perusal. Colonel Money is thoroughly versed in his subject, and reveals some curious facts about both sorts of tea and a few 'secrets' of the trade which should open people's eyes indeed. The great merit of his contribution to the question, however, lies in the fact that he is no headstrong bigoted monopolist. He says plainly enough, 'I am an expert in tea matters' but he admits that there are others like him, and, consequently, that what the public has to do, is to find out what he has to say, and what the others have to say on the other side, and then to form a judgment may be arrived at.

Briefly put, the sum and substance of his argument is this: Indian Teas are better than Chinese because they are—

(1) Cheaper, and more manufactured on large estates under the superintendence of skilled Englishmen.

(2) They are manufactured by machinery—which is clean; instead of by hand—which is distastefully dirty.

(3) They are unadulterated; which porting is the best of all reasons for encouraging the trade.

(4) They are stronger, 'go farther,' and are therefore more economical.

Each of these points is proved by an array of facts which so much more than sufficiently conclusive; and we agree with Colonel Money in the belief that the superior merits of Indian Teas have only to be generally known—that is, far better known than they are at present—for a considerable revolution in the tea trade to take place. Such a revolution, Colonel Money will surely do a great deal to this end; and still further results may be looked for if the community would take for themselves. Says Colonel Money:—'If you drink Indian tea for one week, you will, I know, endorse all I have said in its favour, and drink no other ever after.' To which we may add that we have never known any one who, having once fairly tried the tea of our great dependence, reverted to the product of the Heathen China. It is mainly a domestic question, of course, but imperial interests are involved in it. In fact, it is because it is so domestic that it is so important. The growth of the Indian tea trade is so much to be desired as the enhancement of the commerce in Indian wheat; and the various and solid advantages which must accrue from it are scarcely less important and inalienable.

A JAPANESE CREMATION.

(Herald W. Lucy, in *Full Mail Gazette*.)

In the House of Commons yesterday, (April 30) the Home Secretary, opposing the bill introduced by Dr. Cameron, urged against cremation that the other nations, more particularly the Greeks, had never adopted the practice. There is one nation, now the oldest empire in the world, where cremation is an established usage, and where the Government, with almost unanimous approval, have of late years carefully established, under Government control, are to be found in all the chief cities. In Tokyo, the principal place of cremation at present, a number of crematoriums have been built in the city, and a few in the neighbourhood, and at the time of my visit we approached it through a dense crowd of holiday makers. The shops were brightly lit. Jiarikasas abounded, most of them holding two, and one at least four, persons, two being babies. On these occasions the Japanese obtain a change of view and position. For the most part it seems out upon the world round the side of its mother or sister's head. But it being physically impossible for a woman to sit in a Jiarika with the feet of her child at her back, it is, on this occasion, only allowed round to the front. Many of the tea-houses in this quarter were brilliantly illuminated with scores of lanterns. One, which our guide said was a 'house-house,' had over a hundred, a tall four-roomed building, which he hanging out a score. It appears that the Japanese are rapidly developing carnivorous tastes. As the home culinary department is not yet equal to cooking joints, the luxurious Japanese of the lower and middle class go out to a beef-house or a goose and duck house, and feast on the unfamiliar viand.

After our hour's drive through a land of busy life we came to the silent house where the dead awaited the last service of the living. It stands a little apart from the main road, a building of a simple story, with an innocent-looking tall chimney, and might be connected with a pottery or a small iron foundry. The business is always conducted privately, and there are few in Tokyo, except those who are professionally engaged, who have witnessed the ceremony. But at the crematoriums under the compunctious Foreign Minister opened the doors, and secured a respectful welcome for us. We were first received in the house of the manager, where tea was served in priceless porcelain cups of Japanese work. The furnace, if so imposing a name may be used for a process so simple, stood a few paces from the house. On entering it there was nothing to be seen but what appeared to be two butter bins resting upon a few logs of wood. There were several cavities about the furnace, and a tall iron pipe leading from the bottom floor, and these were filled with straw bales. According to municipal law, no burning is to be done before half-past six in the evening. It still wanted ten minutes to that time, but in the circumstances the manager thought he would be safe in anticipating the hour, and the shavings were fired.

One of the men, kneeling before the glowing flame, fanned it with a piece of wood. It caught the dry fagots, gradually heated the sides of the pit, rose high in the air, and then, with a loud crack, the head of the barrel burst outward. Quick as thought, the man seized a large piece of wood, lying by in readiness, and hid from sight whatever may have protruded. It is the heat of the skillful cremator that under his supervision the contents of a barrel are never exposed to any risk of catching fire. A wet straw lid over the length of the barrel before the fire is ignited. As the barrel is burned away this falls in and covers the body. In three hours the work is done. Every particle of flesh is burned away, and there remains only a few bones, the bones and the teeth the relatives collect, and give them sepulture.

There are three classes of cremation at this establishment. In the first class each body is burned separately, a charge being made of seven yen, equal to twenty-eight shillings in our money. In the second class the charge is only ten shillings, the difference being that two or more, according to the briskness of trade, are burned at the same time. The third class pay six-and-sixpence, the resemblance of a coffin provided by the body being disposed of with it. It will be seen that, as compared with the most moderate scale of ordinary burial charges, cremation is cheap. As far as I could gather, it is this which recommends itself to the class of Japanese, generally the least wealthy, who avail themselves of the resources at the establishment at Shen Jo and kindred institutions.

MILITARY BALLOONING.

Aeronauts and others interested in ballooning will be glad to hear that Major Elsholtz, R. E., has been appointed to be Chief Superintendent of the Balloon Establishment at the School of Military Engineering, Chatham. The ball court at St. Mary's Barracks has been converted into workshops. A large number of women and girls are now employed in making balloons for extensive experiments to take place during the summer months, and also balloons for a balloon equipment for the next campaign. A number of officers, non-commissioned officers, and sappers will be instructed in the manufacture of coal and hydrogen gas, telegraphic communication, taking of photographs, the use of electric light from balloons, signalling by balloons, and captive balloons, transport packing,

and the construction of screens for the protection of balloons. Hitherto balloons for military experiments have been supplied with gas at or near gasworks, consequently the many difficulties that aeronauts would meet with on service were not foreseen; moreover, all other requirements were available. In order to give the officers and men a practical course of training in the use of balloons, it is expected that a camp of instruction will be formed not far from Chatham. Blue Ball Hill, between Chatham and Maidstone, affords an excellent position for this purpose, for in case of invasion Blue Ball Hill would be fortified by field works, and form one of the look-out stations. In addition, it is a convenient distance from Rochester, Maidstone, Canterbury, and Woolwich, for transporting gas by means of moderate-sized balloons, the balloons to be captive to a wagon or cart, or free whenever the wind would be favourable. In nearly all civilised countries gas would be available, but in some cases at a distance from the base of operations. Practice in conveying gas from one position to another is, therefore, a desideratum. The increasing use of balloons for many years of officers and soldiers, by lectures and letters, to impress upon the authorities the desirability and practicability of balloons for reconnaissance, and signalling appears now about to be adopted.

A PATRIOTIC CANARY.

THE SINGING 'YANKEE DOODLE' AND WAVES IN THE ROSE OF 329 WALTON STREET.

In the rose of 329 Walton Street hangs a bird-cage. In the bird-cage a little canary bird hopped about Wednesday afternoon waving an American flag and whistling 'Yankee Doodle.' An astonished customer least in a condition of sobriety against the launch counter, and he saw him with his eyes and mouth dilated.

'The bird is worth \$200,' said one of the store proprietors. 'It is six months old, and was musically trained by a German. The German played "Yankee Doodle" on a hand organ every Sunday morning for four months, and at the end of that time the canary was an accomplished singer. Start the organ, George, he will, spunking to an approved dispenser of tovernesses. The young man turned the handle of a musical box arrangement and it began whistling as like the canary that never the reporter nor the flat-bellied customer could at first tell which was which. "The bird imitates it exactly," was the explanation, "but she had to be kept shut up and was nervous and did not sing any other music for a long enough time to make her tired of the national anthem."

Occasionally the canary gets "stuck." She goes half way through the tune and then stutters and flounders. This is supposed to be caused by the fumes of the surrounding wire. "The best is setting an orchestra of them trained to play an opera," said the fat boy who sweeps the office, as the reporter went by, "but don't give it away in the paper."—*American*

